



# Introduction

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## Political and Security Affairs:

The Security Council had mixed success in 1998 responding to threats to international peace and security. The United States provided leadership on the Council to continue insistence that Iraq comply with all relevant UN Security Council resolutions, and led coalition air strikes against Iraq when the Government continued to defy the Council. The Council adopted a U.S./U.K. initiative to try the PanAm 103 suspects by a Scottish court in the Netherlands, putting additional international pressure on Libya, but by the end of 1998, Tripoli had not turned over the accused terrorists. A small number of African states violated UN Security Council sanctions against Libya. In Africa, the situation in Sierra Leone, Congo, and Ethiopia/Eritrea gave continued cause for concern, notwithstanding Council efforts to end the conflicts. Fighting resumed in Angola despite the presence of a UN peacekeeping contingent. Serbian atrocities continued in Kosovo in the face of Security Council appeals to stop the violence. The Security Council unanimously adopted a resolution which condemned India's and Pakistan's nuclear tests.

In the General Assembly, U.S. efforts were instrumental in the adoption of a resolution deploring nuclear testing by India and Pakistan. However, outdated and unbalanced rhetoric from the past crept back into several UN General Assembly resolutions on the Middle East. Over U.S. opposition, the General Assembly also upgraded the status of the Palestinian observer mission to the UN.

The size and number of UN peacekeeping operations were relatively stable, with approximately 14,000 peacekeepers deployed. The small UN civilian police mission in Eastern Slavonia, Croatia, terminated on schedule in October. The Security Council established two new peacekeeping operations in the Central African Republic and in Sierra Leone. The U.S. Government continued to work with the United Nations and other countries to improve the civilian police aspect of peacekeeping. The United States and Argentina cohosted a civilian police workshop in December as a follow-up to the UN seminar in March.

## UN Reform:

During 1998, the General Assembly implemented many of Secretary General Annan's reform proposals, which the United States strongly sup-

ported. Cost savings enabled the 1998-1999 UN budget to be reduced to its lowest level since 1992-1993. The United States was instrumental in obtaining a 15 percent staffing reduction in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. The United States also continued to urge that the Security Council be expanded, including a provision for permanent seats for Germany and Japan and up to three permanent seats from the developing countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America and the Caribbean.

### **Economic and Social Affairs:**

Economic and social issues at the United Nations are considered both in the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council as well as in a range of regional and specialized commissions. The prominent economic issues debated in 1998 were the financial crisis, globalization, and trade and development. In each case, the United States sought balanced resolutions identifying best practices available to countries undergoing economic challenges.

In the social arena, the United States highlighted its concern over continued violations of human rights in a number of countries. At the UN Commission on Human Rights, the United States won support for resolutions detailing human rights violations in the former Yugoslavia and in Sudan. The Commission also approved a Chairman's statement on Kosovo. A U.S. resolution identifying human rights violations in Cuba fell four votes short of acceptance. At the General Assembly, the United States played a leading role in obtaining passage of updated resolutions addressing human rights situations in the former Yugoslavia in general and in Kosovo specifically, and in Burma, Cambodia, Haiti, Iran, and Rwanda.

Other social commissions in which the United States is active include the Commission on Sustainable Development, the Commission for Social Development, and the Commission on the Status of Women. At the Commission on the Status of Women, the United States obtained consensus on a resolution on the situation of women and girls in Afghanistan. In the General Assembly the United States cosponsored resolutions to prohibit traffic in women and girls and female genital mutilation.

U.S. drug control objectives were supported by two key UN organizations—the UN International Drug Control Program (UNDCP) and the International Narcotics Control Board. In 1998, UNDCP provided drug control assistance to 65 countries, and the United States was particularly encouraged by UNDCP's renewed emphasis on support for elimination of illicit cultivation of opium and coca. The General Assembly held a special session on countering the world drug problem, attended by President Clinton and 31 other heads of state.

In recognition of the valuable contributions being made by nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) to the work of the United Nations, the United States advocated expanding NGO participation.

### **Development and Humanitarian Relief Activities:**

The United States continued to strongly support a number of UN development and relief organizations dependent on voluntary contributions. The United Nations Development Program managed the world's largest multilateral program of grant technical assistance and received a U.S. contribution of \$98 million in 1998. An additional \$100 million contribution went to UNICEF (UN Children's Fund). World hunger levels rose in 1998 due to climate catastrophes and civil wars, and the United States responded with a \$900 million contribution to the World Food Program (WFP).

At the office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, the United States pressed throughout 1998 for increased donor coordination and shared responsibility, and worked to advance U.S. positions on refugee issues in Kosovo, Bosnia, the Great Lakes of Africa, Afghanistan, Liberia, and Sierra Leone.

During the 1998 General Assembly, the United States cosponsored two resolutions to enhance coordination of UN emergency relief efforts. The United States also joined consensus in adopting all the resolutions on special economic assistance, addressing floods in Bangladesh, effects of Hurricanes Georges and Mitch, and relief needs in a number of other countries affected by war, natural disasters, and refugees.

As a member of the executive board of the UN Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA), the United States played an important role in designing a new sustainable funding facility. The UNFPA does not fund, condone, or promote abortion.

In 1998, the UN Commission on Human Settlements established a task force on environment and human settlement activities. The United States supported the recommendations of the task force, which would provide increased reform and oversight in financial and administrative matters.

The multilateral development organizations of the UN system continued to make important contributions to international efforts to address sustainable development and broad-based growth, poverty alleviation, child and gender issues, and global food security. These efforts are consistent with broad U.S. goals and further its interests around the world. These agencies included the UN Development Program, the Food and Agriculture Organization, the WFP, UNICEF, the UNFPA, Habitat, the UN Capital Development Fund, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, and UNAIDS. The United States had a seat on the Executive Board of each of these organizations and had been successful in pushing for needed reform in their governance, financing, and programmatic activities as well as holding the line on the need for continuing budget stringency.

### **Administration and Budget:**

Progress was achieved in 1998 in the administrative and budget areas. The first year of the 1998-1999 biennium budget was maintained within

the \$2.533 billion budget cap established by Congress, allowing for full payment by the United States of its calendar year 1998 UN regular budget assessments. However, over U.S. objections, a budget outline level of \$2.545 billion for the 2000-2001 biennium was approved in December, marking the start of a year-long process in determining the budget level for the next biennium. There was a continued decline in the overall scope and costs of UN peacekeeping. The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) issued a report summarizing significant findings, recommendations, and actions taken in regard to 80 audits, inspections, investigations, and evaluations, and there was a steadily rising rate of managers' implementation of OIOS recommendations. Five reports were issued by the Joint Inspection Unit. New codes of conduct were implemented, which updated and clarified rules on standards of conduct and performance, set a framework for accountability, and established standards to prevent conflicts of interest.

### **Specialized Agencies:**

In the specialized and technical agencies of the UN system, the United States supported the election of two prominent and reform-minded leaders: Gro Harlem Brundtland, former Prime Minister of Norway, at the World Health Organization (WHO), and Juan Somavia, permanent representative of Chile to the United Nations, at the International Labor Organization (ILO). The United States also was pleased to work with Mohamed El Baradei (Egypt), the recently elected head of the International Atomic Energy Agency, in advancing U.S. and global interests in nuclear safeguards, and with Klaus Toepfer (Germany), who assumed an important role in 1998 as head of the UN Environment Program. WHO put into effect a two-term limit for its elected officials in order to ensure the regular flow of new energies into these top positions. Other agencies had term limits under review.

The technical agencies made significant advances in support of U.S. policies during 1998. The UNDCP, led by newcomer Pino Arlacchi (Italy), received serious support for its efforts to enhance global narcotics control from a special session of the UN General Assembly, attended by President Clinton. Member states at the special session gave commitments for such targets as eradication of illicit drug crops by 2008. The ILO adopted a new "Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights of Work" and a follow-up mechanism to advance workers' rights around the world and help level the playing field for American business and workers in international trade. The U.S. communications industry received important benefits from decisions made at the International Telecommunication Union's Plenipotentiary Conference, hosted by the United States in Minneapolis, Minnesota. With strong U.S. support, the International Civil Aviation Organization created a new aviation safety oversight program that should lead to safer air travel for millions of Americans. WHO mounted new programs to "roll back malaria," complete the global eradication of polio, and achieve new measures for tobacco control around the

world. The International Maritime Organization began consideration of more equitable financing arrangements for the North Atlantic Ice Patrol, a service provided by the U.S. Coast Guard since the sinking of the Titanic in 1912.

Although the United States is not a member of the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), more than 40 senior American educators, led by an Assistant Secretary of Education, made significant contributions at a UNESCO conference on higher education held in Paris. Patent and copyright fees were reduced by the World Intellectual Property Organization at the beginning of 1998. Authority for U.S. international postal policy in the Universal Postal Union was transferred from the U.S. Postal Service to the Department of State by Congressional action.

Despite the many advances in the UN system for U.S. policies, it must be noted that in virtually all of the specialized and technical agencies, U.S. delegates found their efforts to build consensus and support for U.S. policies severely constricted by the failure of an agreement during 1998 to achieve appropriation of funds to pay the high levels of U.S. arrears.